

DAILY BULLETIN

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U.S. SETS OUT MILEPOSTS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF WTO ROUND

Allgeier urges completion of “end game document” by December ministerial

The United States is committed to completing a global trade agreement in the World Trade Organization (WTO) before the end of 2006. It believes that goal is achievable if negotiators can meet a series of mileposts along the way, Deputy U.S. Trade Representative Peter F. Allgeier says.

Speaking February 14 in Geneva at a key meeting of the WTO Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC), the group overseeing the negotiations, Allgeier set out a series of “intermediate goals” for successful conclusion.

Allgeier said that negotiators need to complete an “endgame document” by December 2005 when trade ministers from the 148 WTO members are scheduled to meet in Hong Kong. To achieve that, they will need to “be far along” in the development of that document by the summer break at the end of July, he said.

“We are very pleased at this sense -- that is shared very widely -- that we need to complete the round successfully by 2006,” Allgeier told reporters after the meeting.

“People understand that that means that by Hong Kong we have got to have what we call an ‘endgame document,’” he said. “By July, people are going to have to

feel confident that all the issues are structured in a way that they are moving to that Hong Kong point.”

Negotiators gathered in Geneva February 14 for a stock-taking on progress on the negotiations, formally called the Doha Development Agenda (DDA).

It was the first full gathering of Doha negotiators since a core group of trade ministers representing some 25 countries and trading blocs -- including the United States, the European Union, Canada, Brazil and India -- met in January at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, and pledged to speed up the negotiations' pace.

Allgeier told the TNC that completing the Doha Agenda within the next two years will be a “huge challenge” but can be achieved “if we all intensify our efforts and maintain a strong pace throughout the period of negotiations.”

Progress by the end of July is especially important, he said, because after the summer break negotiators have essentially only two months left to work before the Hong Kong meeting.

Allgeier described the “endgame document” as a text that would provide modalities, or specific details and time frames, in the areas of agriculture and nonagricultural market access (NAMA), “including the various formulae and the necessary numbers.”

He cautioned negotiators not to expect each separate area of the negotiations to progress “in lock step” with the others. “We will have to avoid the temptation to suggest that movement in one area for now isn’t possible because we haven’t seen enough in some other area,” he said. “Each negotiation will have its own rhythm.”

Allgeier said the Bush administration is committed to meeting the intermediate goals as well as to achieving a final agreement in 2006, which he called an essential part of a strategy to promote economic expansion and development globally.

Launched at Doha, Qatar, in 2001, the negotiations languished until negotiators in Geneva in July 2004 reached agreement on a framework for conducting the negotiations on reforming trade in agriculture, manufactured goods and services, and streamlining customs procedures.

That framework agreement resolved some of the decades-old obstacles to agriculture reform, but many

obstacles remain. Allgeier indicated to developing country members, that they now have to show how they are going to reduce barriers to agricultural trade if they want developed countries to reduce domestic support payments to farmers.

On industrial goods, or NAMA, Allgeier reiterated that the United States wants to consider what is called a “Swiss formula” to reduce high tariffs much more sharply than low tariffs. A Swiss formula would produce a narrow range of final tariff rates and set a maximum top rate. Allgeier said the United States is willing to accept somewhat different reduction rates for developed and developing countries.

IRAQ ELECTION RESULTS SET STAGE FOR COALITION BUILDING

Three parties win largest share of the vote

By David Shelby

Washington File Staff Writer

Washington - More than 8.5 million Iraqis defied threats of violence and terrorist attacks to cast their ballots January 30 in the country’s first open, multiparty democratic elections in more than half a century. Voter turnout was slightly above 58 percent.

After two weeks of tallying the votes and investigating polling irregularities, the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI) announced the results of the election on February 13.

About a dozen political entities, out of the 111 on the ballot, received enough votes to be eligible for seats in the 275-member Transitional National Assembly. The final allocation of seats will not take place, however, until the conclusion of a three-day challenge period during which candidates may contest the results.

The United Iraqi Alliance, headed by Abdul Aziz Hakim, received the largest share of the vote, winning 48.2 percent of the ballots cast. The Kurdistan Alliance, which brings together Massoud Barzani’s Kurdistan Democratic Party and Jalal Talabani’s Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, will have the second largest delegation to the Assembly, having won 25.7 percent of the vote. The Iraqi List, led by current Prime Minister Ayad Allawi, came in third with 13.8 percent of the vote.

The IECI will certify the election results after the close of the challenge period. If the final results are consistent with the current numbers, it is likely that no party will have an absolute majority. Furthermore, no single party is close to the two-thirds majority that is necessary to name the three-member Presidency Council, which is the assembly's first order of business.

While the Presidency Council serves a largely ceremonial function, it is entrusted with the task of appointing a prime minister, who will exercise the majority of executive and administrative powers. The prime minister and his or her Council of Ministers is subject to approval by a majority vote in the assembly.

Since no one party is likely to have a clear majority, the parties will have to engage in negotiations and coalition building in order to make governmental appointments and enact legislation.

According to the Transitional Administrative Law (TAL), the assembly must also muster a two-thirds majority to overturn presidential vetoes of proposed legislation.

The primary task of the assembly is to draft a constitution. Several political leaders who fared poorly in the elections have indicated that they are still interested in participating in the constitutional process. This is in keeping with the provisions of the TAL that says the assembly shall proceed with this task "by encouraging debate on the constitution through regular general public meetings in all parts of Iraq and through the media, and receiving proposals from the citizens of Iraq as it writes the constitution."

According to the TAL, it has until August 15 to propose a draft of the document to the Iraqi people, who will vote on it in a referendum October 15. If the voters approve the constitution, it will serve as the basis for a new election December 15 to establish a constitutional government.

"This is a birth for Iraq, a free Iraq," said IECI spokesman Farid Ayar as he released the election results February 13.

In a statement February 13, President Bush said, "I congratulate the Iraqi people for defying terrorist threats and setting their country on the path of democracy and freedom. And I congratulate every candidate who stood for election and those who will take office once the results are certified."

AMBASSADOR NAMED HEAD OF U.S. DELEGATION TO SIX-PARTY TALKS

Christopher Hill will lead interagency group at security talks

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has appointed Christopher Hill, the U.S. ambassador to South Korea, to head the U.S. delegation to the Six-Party Talks on North Korean nuclear weapons programs, the State Department announced on February 14.

Hill will continue to serve concurrently as ambassador to Seoul.

In addition to the United States, the participants in the Six-Party Talks are China, Japan, Russia, South Korea, and North Korea.

Following is the text of a statement from State Department spokesman Richard Boucher:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman
February 14, 2005

Korea -- Appointment of Head of the U.S. Delegation to the Six-Party Talks

Secretary Rice today appointed our Ambassador to Korea, Christopher Hill, to serve concurrently as the head of the U.S. Six-Party Talks delegation.

Ambassador Hill is a career foreign service officer and a veteran negotiator.

Ambassador Hill will remain in Seoul but plans at an early opportunity to meet with his counterparts. He will lead the interagency delegation to the next plenary session of the talks, which we believe should occur at an early date and without preconditions.

Ambassador Hill's appointment underscores U.S. support for the Six-Party Talks and the goal of a diplomatic solution ending North Korea's nuclear weapons programs.

Special Envoy Joseph DeTrani will continue to be responsible for the day-to-day oversight of the Six-Party Talks issues.

U.S. SPONSORS PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN IN EUROPE AND EURASIA

Fact sheet cites economic, sports, anti-trafficking, health care programs

Following is a State Department fact sheet issued February 14 providing an outline of U.S. programs for women in Europe and Eurasia:

U.S. Department of State
Office of the Senior Coordinator for International Women's Issues
Washington, DC
February 14, 2005

U.S. COMMITMENT TO WOMEN IN EUROPE AND EURASIA

"I believe with all my power, when I go back to Kosovo, I will make a change in my government."

-- Kosovar woman working in the municipal government after completing a U.S.-supported Hope Fellowship training program on government.

The United States carries out and/or sponsors programs for women in the region's new and emerging democracies in the following key areas: political participation and leadership training; promoting economic opportunity through entrepreneurial training, microenterprise development and access to credit; reducing domestic violence and human trafficking by educating law enforcement officials, teachers, social workers and the general public; and supporting healthcare with training of healthcare workers and increasing women's access to health education and athletics. Some of the projects the U.S. has implemented for women in the region include:

Political Participation and Civil Society Leadership Training. The Hope Fellowship Program, funded by USAID, fosters leadership skills for qualified women from Kosovo and offers women internships in the United States. In November-December 2004, eight Hope Fellows participated in a two-month program at U.S. governmental organizations to gain leadership, technical and practical skills to apply to their own work in rebuilding Kosovo. To date, a total of 70 women from Kosovo have graduated from the Hope Fellowship program. In Georgia, women participated in a women's leadership program funded by the Freedom Support Act. In 2004, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA)

awarded a grant to Kent State University to conduct a women's leadership exchange program between the United States and Southeastern Turkey. The project includes seminars in Ohio and Turkey on leadership skill-building, decision-making and conflict resolution.

Legal Reform. With U.S. support, the Women's Consortium of Non-Governmental Associations (made up of more than 110 organizations from 42 regions of Russia) worked in close collaboration with the State Duma Committees to develop the draft law "On State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in the Russian Federation," which had its first reading in the Duma in April 2003.

Women in Politics. Three women parliamentarians from Turkey participated in a three week International Visitor Leadership Program on "Women in U.S. Politics," September 2004. The program was designed to broaden their understanding of 1) how women can enter politics from the business sector, education, grassroots organizations, and volunteerism; and 2) the role of women's organizations in shaping political dialogue and developing and electing candidates.

Networking. In 2003, with help from the United States, more than 100 women in the Radusa community of The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia organized their own first-ever meeting to voice their concerns and identify priorities for their community. Their efforts resulted in an agreement to reconstruct a pedestrian bridge leading to the village's only elementary school.

Economic Opportunity

Public-Private Partnerships. Fifty women business owners from small- and medium-sized enterprises from Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Finland, Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus joined 50 U.S. women business leaders at the Riga Women Business Leaders Summit in Riga, Latvia September 2004. The Summit's aim was to help build economic relationships between the Baltic States, their neighbors, and the United States. The U.S. Embassy in Riga and the Latvian President Vaira Vike-Freiberga hosted the Summit, a successor to the 2002 Helsinki Women Business Leaders Summit that former U.S. Ambassador to Finland Bonnie McElveen-Hunter and U.S. businesswoman founded (<http://www.usembassy.fi/servlet/PageServer?Page=hwbls/hwbls.html>). For the second portion of the Riga Summit, the women traveled to the United States in December 2004 to attend a conference at Georgetown University to continue their

partnerships, exchange business best practices and build management skills.

Entrepreneurial Training. With U.S. funding, the Public Organization on Support of Entrepreneurship, Women of Vision, and the Non-Commercial Partnership Siberian Educational Consulting Center are building a network of women across the Russian Far East to advocate for women's rights. The project will create awareness of women's issues, develop leadership skills, and foster regional, inter-cultural, and international exchanges. In October 2003, the United States made it possible for eight women from the Women's Training Center in Estonia to attend an international conference in St. Petersburg that helped women formulate strategies for achieving equality in practice. In Bulgaria, the United States funded 8 courses in shoe-making and sewing for 80 socially disadvantaged Roma women from the town of Dupnitsa and the suburb of Krainitsi. Each graduate will receive job placement in local factories.

Microenterprise Development. For several decades, the United States has been helping the poor -- who depend on microenterprises for their survival -- to gain access to capital, information, inputs, technologies, and markets. Women are major beneficiaries of microloans. In Azerbaijan, Mercy Corps is raising the incomes of rural women microentrepreneurs by making available high quality and reasonably priced veterinary and animal husbandry services for livestock and poultry. Such programs also help veterinarians expand their client base and improve their ability to diagnose and treat.

Credit Access. Sponsored by ECA, Elmir Ismayilov of Azerbaijan is a "Contemporary Issues Fellow" at the University of Michigan. In Azerbaijan, he helped develop local credit mechanisms for women. Today, in his work as a community development officer with a non-profit agency, Ismayilov has helped financial institutions to revise lending methodologies, conduct outreach to women, and implement post loan trainings to minimize delinquency and business failure among women. The establishment of creditworthiness among women has laid a foundation for future access to funding and services from commercial financial institutions.

Business Development. Eight women business leaders and entrepreneurs from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Latvia, Norway, Romania, and Switzerland participated in a 3-week European Regional International Visitor Leadership Program on "Business Development Issues for Women Business Leaders" in June 2004. Their

program provided practical insights into initiatives that promote the development of women business owners; introduced federal, state, and local policies designed to advance women's prominence in business leadership; and provided opportunities for visitors to meet with women business leaders and owners in a variety of contexts throughout the United States, and who shared personal success stories and challenges.

Combating Domestic Violence

Training and Crisis Centers. A United States-sponsored program for 2003-04 trained between roughly 150 civil servants, medical workers, educators, and law-enforcement officers on how to combat domestic violence in Russia. The project promotes cooperation among NGOs and Russian state agencies on the prevention of family violence. The United States also is assisting one of Russia's oldest crisis centers to update and improve its statistical database on domestic violence. Access to this resource by lawyers and legal aid clinics will improve legal services for victims of domestic violence. Twelve women's organizations and crisis centers will receive a user's manual with a description of typical cases and recommended courses of action. Four centers will be trained directly on how to use and update the information.

Anti-Trafficking Efforts

Raising Awareness of Trafficking. In Estonia, the United States has provided resources to the public library at the Estonian Women's Studies and Resource Center to educate police and border guard officials, youth workers, social workers, teachers, and vocational counselors about the causes and consequences of prostitution and trafficking in women. In Albania, the U.S. Embassy Tirana's Democracy Commission Small Grants Program supported the production of a short drama by high school students depicting the tragedy of human trafficking. Written by a prominent Albanian author, the play addressed a range of issues associated with trafficking in persons.

Trafficking Prevention Centers. In Ukraine, the United States funded seven women's trafficking prevention centers (TPC). The TPCs have hotlines and offer referral services for health, legal, and psychological counseling. The Trafficking Prevention Program works with Ukrainian women's NGOs to provide job skills training, legal consulting services, and a public education campaign. Since 1998, 44,850 women have received consultations or job skills training; 5,040 women have found work or received a promotion due to the training program;

176 businesses have been created; and 26,149 women completed trafficking prevention or domestic violence awareness training.

Law Enforcement/Training. With U.S. support, the Women's Rights Center in Yerevan, Armenia, conducted 16 training sessions on domestic violence and 14 sessions on trafficking in women for 225 professionals from law-enforcement, government, NGOs, teachers, doctors, journalists, and psychologists between October 2002 and June 2003. The Center publishes a newsletter on women's issues and broadcasts TV and radio programs on the prevention of trafficking in persons and domestic violence against women. Two members of the Armenian Government's Interagency Group To Combat Trafficking visited the United States for further training; they had an opportunity to develop concrete approaches to combating trafficking. In Romania, the Regional Anti-Trafficking Best Practice Manual is the culmination of an intensive 2-year cooperation among the U.S., the UN Development Program (UNDP), and Romania's Ministry of Administration and the Interior. Written for border police officers, specialized police units, and prosecutors, the manual was officially adopted by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime at the regional law enforcement senior officials meeting in Vienna in December 2003.

Legal Reform. In July 2004, five representatives from the Finnish Parliament, Ministries, and NGO's participated in a 1-week Voluntary Visitor Program in Washington, DC, and Atlanta, Georgia, focusing on U.S. Governmental and non-governmental efforts in combating trafficking and assisting victims. The program gave the participants the opportunity to learn about U.S. legislation and strategies and NGOs' efforts in victim identification and assistance. It prepared them with models and ideas to help implement Finland's new anti-trafficking program. ECA also awarded grants in FY 2003 for anti-trafficking programs in Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Romania, and Serbia and Montenegro. These exchanges targeted representatives from NGOs and government agencies and their efforts to draft new laws and legislation to address anti-trafficking efforts in their countries.

Healthcare

New Medical Equipment. The U.S. Government donated \$500,000 in equipment and supplies to Uzbekistan to help continue to improve healthcare for women and children. New medical equipment will help twelve central hospitals, two maternity houses and selected rural medi-

cal points in the regions of Kashkadarya and Surkhandarya to Training programs on the new equipment will ensure that maternity wards and pediatric departments provide better care for their patients.

Training. In 2003, the United States brought maternal and child healthcare experts from Russia to demonstrate how the U.S. healthcare system in works to assure a healthy pregnancies, deliveries, and early childhoods. Participants became familiar with models of healthy lifestyles, childbirth education, and family-centered maternity care. The United States also helped train volunteers from the blind female community in Vladivostok, so they could provide psychological support to other visually impaired women and programs aimed at integrating blind women into community life. In addition, the project worked to create networks between organizations serving the blind and other women's NGOs in Vladivostok.

Education and Information. As part of a series of events on breast cancer, Kathy Pardew, wife of the U.S. Ambassador, hosted a book launch at the U.S. Embassy in Sofia, Bulgaria, in October 2003. The book, "Ask the Doctor: Breast Cancer" by Dr. V. Friedewald and Dr. A.U. Buzdar, was translated into Bulgarian by the embassy. Several dozen Bulgarian physicians, breast cancer survivors, and breast cancer activists attended the event, which was covered by the Bulgarian press. Speakers highlighted the changing public attitudes toward cancer and the importance of building networks among patient groups, women leaders, journalists, and doctors.

Athletics/Sports

Management Training. In April 2003, a delegation from the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Kosovo undertook a week-long Voluntary Visitor program in New York, Chicago, and Washington, D.C. on how to organize, recruit, fund, and manage girls/women's sports teams -- specifically soccer -- and the role that government, business, and private citizens play in managing and funding sports leagues. With very few organized sports teams for youth and none for girls, the officials hope to promote sports as a beneficial activity for girls. The development of sports programs for women and girls can have a positive effect on women's lives.